



Del Van Gorder School Faro, Yukon

Student Handbook 2018 - 2019



Home of the Falcons!

Principal's Message

August 24, 2018

Well, here we go! The 2018-19 school year is already upon us and I'm beyond excited to get this jam-packed year of learning and growing started with our students. Besides having a new principal, we are welcoming our new grade 6/7 teacher, Annette McAlpine, and with Bill Bennett moving on to Dawson City we're regaining Greg Storey as our super Superintendent. Implementation of the new curriculum is well underway from K-9, with 10-12 starting the new curriculum this fall.

Upon buying a home and moving to Faro in August 2016, my family and I have been warmly welcomed and supported by the entire community and have already made close connections and relationships with families, neighbours, and various community members. I have discovered Faro is a throwback community that rarely still exists, if at all, where people get involved and work together to create an atmosphere of community that is full of activities, events, and safe places for children to play and grow. With that said, Education is an area we are all extremely invested in and as Principal of Del Van Gorder I intend on continuing to foster close community relationships and forging an educational program reflective of community expectations.

In my philosophy of education, I feel school connectivity is first and foremost and the community needs to be involved in the school and the decisions propelling it forward. In my previous experience, working as a high school teacher and vice principal in Ross River, the important work of connecting school and community was rewarding, transforming, and extremely educational for myself. I came to understand the need for the school environment and curricular programming to reflect the student's identity and interests for full engagement and maximized results. Students need to feel they are invested in their education and see the school as the best vehicle to allow them to reach their next level of education.

As the principal of Del Van Gorder, I will be dedicated to working with school council and its representatives, parents, staff and students to fulfill the vision of education in Faro, to reflect the hopes and aspirations of parents and the community. As a parent of a child in grade two, and another to enter the school in a few years, my commitment to my child's education is like all others in the community, the best possible level of diversified, cutting-edge programming that has meaning to its students and aligns with their educational goals and opportunities in future job markets. I am excited and enthusiastic by the opportunity of being the principal at Del Van Gorder for many years to come and working together to achieve that worthy goal of providing the very best for our children and allow them to focus on being kids and dreaming big for their future.

Sincerely,

Paul McFadyen

DVG Mission and Vision Statements

"Our mission is to dedicate ourselves to the development and success of the whole child as we foster a continual learning environment with our community and family partners."

At Del Van Gorder School we have a vision where:

- All students, regardless of background, gender, ethnicity or orientation are ACHIEVING and SUCCEEDING within a safe and caring and socially-just learning environment
- All students are recognized, affirmed, and celebrated
- The school, family, and community, in partnership with each other, collaboratively assume responsibility for the whole child

School Council

The School Council members are elected individuals whose job is to represent the parents' and community views on educational issues. They are also the important contributors to the Governorship and direction of the school. In general terms the functions of the council are as follows:

1. To review and modify, if necessary, school objectives, priorities, policies, and other matters required for the effective functioning of the school.
2. To provide a forum for parents to learn and make inquiries about the processes and procedures affecting their child(ren).
3. To provide a voice that reflects community attitudes and values as they relate to the education of their child(ren).

Council meetings are open to the public and usually take place on the first Monday of every month at 7 pm in the school. If you wish to bring concerns to the council or get further information on how you might become more actively involved, please call any member of the council.

Current Council Members:

Ted Baker	Secretary Treasurer
Tina Freake	Chair
Sarah Piercey	Member
Rose Stubbs	Member
Mathew Went	Member

School Hours

School starts at 8:40 am. Lunch runs from 12:00 -12:50 and school ends at 3:20. Supervision of students in the morning begins at 8:20. Students may stay for lunch and will be supervised in the Home Ec. Room.

The school office is open from 8:20 to 4:00 pm every school day. Please feel free to call (994-2760) if you have any questions or concerns.

The school is never closed due to weather. Please ensure that during winter months your kids come to school equipped to go outside with appropriate winter clothing (see clothing section for more details).

Staff

Paul McFadyen	Principal, English 8-12, Socials 8-12
Roxine Cull	Administrative Assistant
Marilyn Fradsham	K-4/5, PE 1/2/3, French 1-5
Victoria Fitzpatrick	Grades 1,2,3
Pamela Morrissey	Grades 4,5
Annette McAlpine	Grades 6,7
Tricia Lefebvre	High School: Science, Math, electives
Frank de Jong	Music, PE 8-12, French 8-10, Art 8/9, Woodworking 4-12
Tracy Shaw	Reading Recovery, Learning Assistance
Colleen Slonski	Educational Assistant
Maribel Gabat	Educational Assistant
Rachel Rodnunsky	Educational Assistant
Lorraine Wilcox	Library Clerk
Property Management Staff	
Bonnie Bowness	Head Custodian
Deb Cheater	Custodian
Jennifer Benoit	Relief Custodians
Sharon Johnson	Relief Custodian
Andy Blattman	Building Maintenance Worker

Important School Dates 2018 - 2019

August 24	PD Day (in school planning)
August 27	School Start – first day of school
September 3	Labour Day (no school)
September 10	Staff Training Day (no school)
September 26	YTA Conference-Travel Day (no school)
September 27	YTA Conference (no school)
September 28	YTA Conference (no school)
October 8	Thanksgiving Day (no school)
November 9	Professional Development (no school)
November 12	Remembrance Day (no school)
December 20 to January 4, 2019	Christmas Break (no school)
January 7, 2019	School Start Date
February 22	Heritage Day (no school)
March 18 to March 22	Spring Break (no school)
April 19	Good Friday (no school)
April 22	Easter Monday (no school)
May 20	Victoria Day (no school)
June 3	Last Day of School for students – shortened day (240 minutes)
June 4	PD Day (Last Day of School for teaching staff)

Success

Proven Tips for Success

The following list is a short list of things that parents and students can do to improve chances for a successful year:

Students:

- be on time → only 10 minutes late a day adds up to months of lost school over a K-12 journey
- come to class prepared and organized (this includes having all your supplies!)
- ask questions and participate enthusiastically
- give your opinions graciously
- follow the school rules
- if you see something wrong, let your teacher know right away
- listen to your teachers – they want the best for you
- be friendly and supportive of your fellow students
- keep up with homework – plan ahead if you know you'll be away or have other commitments
- set goals and do your best each day to work towards them

Parents:

- ensure your children arrive at school on time and have had a nourishing breakfast
- help us foster the concept with your child that learning and school is important
- support your child's teacher – you both want the same thing!
- be aware of all aspects of your child's schooling – ask them and ask us questions
- celebrate your child's educational successes and milestones
- be involved at the school and attend events to show interest in what your children do here
- communicate with the school – let us know if there are home factors we should know that would affect your child's learning
- work with the school to address concerns

Elementary School Program (K-7)

Our elementary school program runs from Kindergarten to Grade 7 at DVG. Within this program we designate K-3 as Primary, Gr 4-5 Intermediate and Gr 6-7 Middle School. Report cards for students in K to Gr 7 are sent out 3 times a year. For K – 7 students, report cards will be sent home on November 23, 2018, March 1, 2019, and May 31, 2019. After each report card, parents are encouraged to schedule meetings with the classroom teacher to go over their child's progress. However, we urge you not to wait for report cards. Your child's teacher would love to hear from you.

Evaluation of your child is always done using a variety of assessment tools. They may include in class assignments, teacher observation records, homework, projects, presentations, in-class behaviour and effort, and tests. The purpose of assessment is as follows:

1. To provide students feedback on their own learning journey
2. To provide meaningful information to parents on the academic progress of their child
3. To provide teachers guidance as to where the child has areas of strength and areas needing improvement so they can adjust their strategies
4. To provide accountability within the Yukon Education system, including the ability for students to readily transfer to other jurisdictions or on to post-secondary education

A new evaluation format could possibly be implemented this year. We will let you know when this information becomes available to us.

Primary Student Evaluation:

Primary level students are progressively evaluated on a system of performance indicators. The indicators are as follows:

K-5 (K-4 students do not receive report cards)

- 1 – exceeds expectations
- 2 – meeting expectations
- 3 – approaching expectations

Grades 1-3

- 1 – exceeds expectations
- 2 – meets expectations
- 3 – requires support to meet expectations (approaching expectations)
- 4 – not yet meeting expectations

Grade 4-12 Student Evaluation:

86 – 100%	A	outstanding
73 – 85%	B	very good
67- 72%	C+	good
60 – 66%	C	satisfactory
50 – 59%	C-	needs improvement: minimally meets grade level expectations
Any percent	“I”	Incomplete and/or does not meet grade level expectations - no credit given. Any student that still holds an “I” by the end of the course will have the mark converted to a failing grade.
<50%	F	Fail

High School Program (Grades 8-12)

The high school courses this year are: Math 8-11, PE 8-12, English 8-12, Woodshop 8-12, Social Studies 11, Electives. Additional blended learning courses can be planned for students whose course needs do not fit into the planned course offerings.

Some high school courses are offered in the blended learning format. Blended learning courses offer online content delivery through various media. This format is well-researched and is in use over much of rural Yukon. It is even used by top high schools and universities, such as High Tech High and MIT. The blended format is ideal for multi-grade situations (such as our Gr 8-12 high school), as up to 7 courses can typically be offered in one block supervised by one teacher. It also opens up course content that we would not be able to normally offer due to small demand. Students get the right courses at the right difficulty level for their abilities. This is particularly important in Math, as there are multiple possible choices for math each year in high school. Students progress through blended courses at their own pace and some can even complete 2 courses in the time allotted for one. However, they are not alone or unsupported when they do so. They are assisted by their teacher (who is a specialist) to understand challenging concepts, complete tests, and check on performance. The teacher also helps the student make **and stick to** a schedule to finish the course on time. Some blended learning courses involve group discussion, hands-on activities, and demonstrations. For more information on blended learning, please speak with Ms. Lefebvre.

Semesters and Terms:

Semester One:	August 27, 2018 – January 18, 2019
Reports:	November 2, 2018 (Term 1, Semester 1) January 25, 2019 (Term 2, Semester 1 Final Report)
Semester Two:	January 21, 2019 – May 31, 2019
Reports:	March 29, 2019 (Term 1, Semester 2) May 31, 2019 (Final Report Card)

The secondary students in Grades 8 through 12 are on a hybrid semester and linear timetable. This means that some classes are half year in length (80 min each day) and other classes run the full year and are 40 min each day or 80 minutes every other day.

General School Rules

School rules are in place to allow all students and staff to have the ability to share in the benefits of our school community. To share these benefits, students and staff must feel safe and secure in an environment promoting a positive learning atmosphere. Any student who chooses to ignore or break a rule acts against the best interest of all. An offending student may lose privileges that are enjoyed as a part of the school community. At DVG we have high expectations for all.

General Expectations of Students

- ❖ be aware of the school rules and respect them
- ❖ report students who are breaking school rules
- ❖ attend regularly and be on time
- ❖ respect each other
- ❖ complete all assigned work
- ❖ work to the best of ability
- ❖ be courteous towards fellow students, staff and visitors
- ❖ respect school property including books and equipment
- ❖ refrain from all abusive language (foul or hurtful)
- ❖ no pushing, shoving or rough play (respect others personal space)
- ❖ respect staff members and obey their instructions

By law and for obvious health reasons, no person is to smoke within 5 meters of the school property.

Please note: Due to some severe allergies to smoke within our school community, we will ask any student who comes to school in clothes that smell strongly of smoke or perfume to change into something else or they will be sent home. Visitors who smell strongly of smoke or perfume may be asked to remain in the boot room depending on the time of day. Please speak to the Principal if you have any concerns regarding our healthy school policy.

Student Discipline

Student discipline at the school is the joint responsibility of teachers, the Principal and the School Council. It is next to impossible to create a list of forbidden items or actions that would include all possible scenarios. It should go without saying that students are to be respectful of others at the school and this includes refraining from profanity, fighting, bullying, vandalism, abuse of technology, nastiness, threats or defiance. Students are expected to comply with the school rules and to follow the directions of staff members, unless their personal safety is threatened. Weapons are forbidden at school, as is possession of or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Consequences to offences will be based on the age of the offender, the seriousness of the incident, and the number of offences previously committed.

Parents may or may not be contacted for a minor first offence (usually depending on the wishes of the parent), but will be contacted upon further offences. There are some offences that require a student to be immediately sent home and suspended. These include: physical violence, possession of or being under the influence of drugs (including alcohol), weapon possession, deliberate vandalism or threats of a harmful nature. Return to school plans will be discussed with the Principal, classroom teacher, and parent(s). Suspensions over 3 days in duration will also involve the Superintendent and School Council.

Lunch

Lunch break will take place between 12:00 noon and 12:50 p.m. Students participating in the supervised lunch program should bring self-contained lunches that don't need to be cooked or reheated as we have limited ability to microwave. If a hot lunch is desired at school, a thermos can keep food hot until lunchtime. For students returning to school early from lunch at home, supervision of the playground begins at 12:25 pm. Del Van Gorder School has been peanut free in the past, but as we no longer have a student with life-threatening peanut allergies, peanuts are no longer banned from the school.

Supervision

Staff members and substitute teachers have the full authority of the administration at all times, whether on formal supervision duty or not. School rules and expectations apply to all school activities and outings including field trips and extracurricular activities.

Supervision of students is provided by staff members before school (starting at 8:20), recess break, lunch time, and after school (until 3:30 pm). For students that would like to stay after school, the student requires a staff member to agree to take responsibility for them and their activities during that time. The after school tutor (Homework Club) may be available for this supervision as well. Please talk to the teacher to see if this arrangement is possible.

Children arriving late:

If your child (Grade 3 and under) arrives late to school (any time past 8:40 am for the morning start), please ensure that an adult or responsible older student (Grade 8 and above) checks them into the office and/or into the care of a staff member. This avoids unfortunate situations of students wandering the halls without supervision.

Supervision of children before school:

Please note that supervision of children dropped off at the school begins at 8:20 am. If your schedule requires you to drop off your child before this time, please be aware that your child is not guaranteed to be supervised by a staff member and the front door of the school may not be open. The parent/guardian assumes full responsibility for the child and their actions until 8:20 am and after their release from school at the end of the day.

Visitor Policy

Parents and community members are encouraged to visit the school. Students are also welcome to bring school-aged visiting friends to school **with advance permission** of their teacher. Visiting students may also be required to provide written parental permission to participate in certain activities. We request that **all** visitors to the school enter through the front boot room entrance and check in at the office before proceeding toward the classrooms.

Yukon Education forbids pets from entering the building due to allergies, liability, and sanitation requirements.

Student Vehicles

Students are asked not to park or ride motorized vehicles (ex. quads, snowmobiles, cars, etc.) on school grounds for liability reasons. This includes the back fields and access road. Parking is available in the front paved parking lot. Students with motorized vehicles are asked not to give rides to other students without the permission of that child's parents. The school is not responsible for ensuring that your child transits home in a safe manner.

Leaving School Policy

Except when students leave for lunch, any student that needs to leave school grounds during school hours must sign out at the office. This includes students who are picked up during regular school hours by parents. Students under the age of 16 are not to leave school grounds without the permission of their teacher or parent (implied consent to leave for lunch is granted automatically). Students aged 16 or older may sign themselves out. However, without a valid reason to do so, if a class is missed during this time, it will be counted as skipping class and consequences will be applied. Students are not to leave the school grounds at recess break without permission of the Principal.

Please note: Primary students (Kindergarten-Grade 3) can only be picked up by parents or by their officially designated alternatives. We keep a list of adults or responsible students who are allowed to pick up your primary child. Please contact the office if you have not yet designated other individuals who can pick up your children in these grades.

Clothing and Personal Items

Clothing for school has, for the most part, been left to the discretion of parents. Clothing should be relatively scent free (as scents are becoming an increasingly more common cause of headaches and allergic reactions). Students may not wear clothing that promotes violence, alcohol or drugs, has inappropriate language on it or suggests promiscuity (as determined by the teacher or Principal). Clothing should also meet a standard of modesty appropriate for school. Students wearing inappropriate attire will be asked to remove the clothing and to wear something more suitable.

Students and visitors are encouraged to refrain from wearing hats in the hallway or hoods over their heads for safety and security reasons. Students are to wear appropriate and clean footwear at all times inside the building in case there is a reason requiring a quick evacuation. Students are required to have inside-only footwear for PE and to avoid tracking mud, dirt and salt over the school carpets.

In winter time when the temperature is warmer than -25°C students typically go outside for recess and lunch (up to 30 minutes at a time). PE can also be held outdoors. Please ensure that your child comes to school with appropriate gear for this weather (ex. snow pants, warm coat, gloves/mittens and boots).

School is a place for learning and as such, mobile electronic devices may only be used in the classroom at the discretion of the teacher. Students must have permission for their use beforehand. For safety reasons, students are not to wear headphones or ear buds while walking down the hallways, in the lunch room, boot room or on school grounds. Students are not to use any gaming devices anywhere outside of their classrooms. Use of these devices in the classroom is at the discretion of the teacher. Rather than relying on cell phones, parents are encouraged to contact their children using the office to avoid interrupting classes. Students are able to use the office phone for personal local calls as well.

Students are also cautioned to avoid bringing valuable items or breakable toys to school. The school takes no responsibility for items that are lost or destroyed on the premises.

Textbooks and School Supplies

Textbooks are assigned to students by their teacher. There is no cost for textbook use; however, a lost or damaged book is the responsibility of the student and they will be assessed a replacement or damage fee. No new textbook will be issued until the fee is paid. Refunds will be given if lost textbooks are found and returned to the teacher.

Lockers

Lockers will be assigned to each student by their homeroom teacher. Lockers are the property of the school and the contents of the lockers are subject to school inspection at the discretion of the teachers and principal at any time for any reason. The school is not responsible for items lost from a locker.

Homework Club

Homework Club usually starts up by the end of September and is a free after school tutoring and academic enrichment service funded by Yukon Education. The club runs Monday-Thursday for an hour after school and is open to students in Grades 1-12. Attendance can be arranged in advance or the student can simply drop in.

When students have missed a lot of school and/or are very behind in their work (typically 3 or more assignments), they also may be assigned to go to Homework Club to complete work in a supervised setting. Some students may also be asked to go to Homework Club to replace lost learning time if they did not accomplish what they were supposed to in class due to behavior issues. When a child is assigned to Homework Club, they have the option of deferring to the next day with their parent's permission.

Attendance and Sick Policies

Regular attendance is extremely important to any student's academic success. Many studies have shown a direct relationship between attendance and academic achievement. Students absent from school for any reason are responsible for requesting and completing work missed during their absence. When a child is going to be absent from school, please notify the office as soon as possible. If you need to pick up your child from school at an unusual time, please come to the office first and we will get your child from class. It is best to check with the office about appropriate times to do this.

Student attendance is checked every day and parents are called if a student is absent from school without notice. When students are absent from school (for whatever reason), they miss important learning experiences and opportunities in the classroom. Thus, at the teacher's discretion, a student that has a significant number of absences (ex. 5 or more in the same month) or a substantial amount of unfinished work, may be asked to stay after school. This time is meant to give learning support to help students catch up on missed learning, and is not a punishment. Parents and students will be given advance warning (no less than 24 hours) before a student will be required to stay after school for learning support. Free after school tutoring is available for students who fall behind in their work or need additional assistance.

DVG Sick Child Policy

1. Parents have the option of keeping their child home from school when they feel their child is too sick for school. If the child is frequently absent due to sickness (ex. missing more than 20% of the school year), the school will suggest that a doctor is consulted to determine the reasons for the illnesses.
2. If a child tells their teacher they are sick and want to go home or lie down, then the staff member must proceed to treat the child's claims as true, unless there is a very good reason not to believe the child. This is for the school's liability, as well as for the child's own well-being. Please discuss this with your child, as it is not something to be abused.
3. The school has a right to suggest to parents that their children are too sick to be at school. If a child comes to school and the staff feel that the child is too sick to be here:

- a. The Principal or the Administrative Assistant will attempt to contact the parent/guardian to see if the parent is willing/able to pick the child up.
Or
 - b. The child's teacher may choose to put the child in the medical room and inform the Principal and the Administrative Assistant
Or
 - c. The Principal (or designate) will consult with the Medical Clinic if conditions (a) and (b) are not feasible or appropriate.
4. In cases of conflict between the parent and teacher/staff member over whether a child should be sent home from school and what constitutes "too sick" for school, the Principal will consult teacher, parent, and appropriate medical personnel to make the judgment for next steps.

Please note: Parents will also be given a two-week notice (minimum) when vaccinations are going to be offered at the school. Permission slips for students to receive vaccinations at the school will be required.

Communication Between Home and School

Due to our many (often daily) interactions between staff and parents, communication between the school and home has been easy to achieve. However, we have a variety of other means of communication between home and school. These methods include communication books, class websites, monthly school newsletters, the school website, emails, office appointments, etc.. Report cards are also sent out 3-4 times a year and are available in both paper or electronic formats. Please contact us if you would like your child's report sent by email.

If you have a wish to speak to any staff member, please also don't hesitate to approach us. We would love to speak to you! Please note, however, that only teachers (not educational assistants) can give progress reports on your child.

Dealing with Concerns

If there are concerns about anything at the school, the best results are generally obtained by contacting the teacher first to try to resolve or address the concern with them. The next step is to contact the Principal if there remains an issue. School Council members are available to support parents with concerns as well, but it is recommended that you deal first with the school directly.

School Council Meetings and Concerns

School Council generally meets on the first Monday of each month in session at 7 pm in the school. These are general information sharing meetings that are open to the public with publicly-available notes. The topics of conversation at School Council are around school policy, growth planning, and governance. They also help plan and run a variety of school events. These meetings are not the forum to bring up any concerns about teachers or other sensitive matters, as such things are dealt with confidentially and respectfully. If you would like School Council to discuss confidential school matters, the Council requests that you speak to a member directly or send a letter to be read by the council in an *in camera* session.

Emergency Preparedness

The fire alarms will sound if there is need for an immediate school evacuation. The major collection point of all evacuations is the Faro Town Office. Six fire evacuation drills will be performed each school year to practice and re-enforce the fire drill procedures. In addition, two Lock Down drills and one Earthquake drill will take place for students within the school year. In the event of an emergency, the school website: <http://dvg.yukonschools.ca> has information for parents on how to proceed.